

# Purpose UP

- Speaker 1: It's time to look for and act on purpose. Welcome to the Purpose Up podcast, with your host, Ben Stein.
- Ben Stein: Hello friends, and welcome to episode 3 of the Purpose Up podcast. Today I sit down and speak with Devin Martin of Lifestyle Integrity Coaching. Devin is a life and career coach. I had a really fun time with my conversation with him. We dive into the difference between life coaching and therapy, we talk about his approach to life coaching. He relays the story of how he lived in a cabin in the woods of North Carolina for a year by himself. A really fascinating story.
- We talk about purpose, and discuss it in the context of essence and form, which I think is a really great way to look at it. He describes the difference between intuition, instinct, and intellect, and how they guide us. I really hope you enjoy this episode as much as I did recording it, and I think you'll get a lot out of it. With that, I give you Devin Martin.
- Hello, everybody, and welcome to the Purpose Up podcast. I'm Ben Stein, and I'm here with life and career coach Devin Martin. Welcome, Devin.
- Devin Martin : Thanks for having me.
- Ben Stein: My pleasure, my pleasure. Devin, when people ask you what it is that you do, what do you tell them?
- Devin Martin : I generally say I'm a life coach, or I'm a life and career coach, and then wait for the questions.
- Ben Stein: All right, what are the most common follow-up questions that you get?
- Devin Martin : Most people say, "I've heard of that, what is that?" I think the best way to get people understanding it is to compare it to therapy, usually. Most people get what therapy is, and they get the format, they get sitting down one-on-one, talking to somebody, and then you can start to draw some comparisons and contrast it a bit. I'll often talk about the fact that therapy is very much, usually about the past. It's about understanding the emotional and intellectual content in the present, and understanding its roots, and accepting it, and learning how to deal with it. I think of it as a normative profession. It's trying to take people's dysfunctions and bringing them up to normal functioning. It deals pathology, it deals with mental health issues.
- I would usually say that coaching picks up where therapy leaves off, in the sense that my work is all about peak performance. If your anxiety is keeping you from leaving the house, you probably need to be in therapy. If you're thinking about launching a new brand and you're having some anxiety about how to be successful,

# Purpose UP

then coaching might be more useful.

Ben Stein: Okay. Let's just say I've got this friend who is starting a podcast, but he's got fear that he doesn't have much to say, or people wouldn't want to listen to him in a saturated field. What type of life-coaching approach would you take there?

Devin Martin : I would generally probably advise you to get out of your head. I think a lot of what I do these days is grapple with modernity, which is hyper-obsession with the mind. Most people overthink most everything they do. What I do best is probably ground people in action. It's like, "You have an insight, you have an intuition, you have an idea, what are you doing about it?" Rather than sitting around thinking about all the possible scenarios and how it might or might not work out, it's like, "What are small steps you can do to achieve a big goal?"

Then, there's also a lot of state control. How do you center yourself, how do you grapple with anxiety and fear when it does arise, and I'll get people meditating, I'll get them doing breathing exercises, I'll get them working with their posture. Even something as simple as controlling your facial expressions can change your state of mind. There's almost always a component of underlying health. Are you eating properly? Are you sleeping?

I have a little kid, so I've developed a toddler theory, which basically says that everybody's a toddler. When you have a 3 year old or a 2 year old and they don't get enough sleep, they become a raging asshole really quickly. Then, they take a nap, and they're the most joyful, creative human being in the world. I think adults tend to think that we're different, in that we can under-sleep, and drink coffee, and do that for 5, 10 years in a row. A lot of my work is taking these massively successful people, and saying something as simple as, "How many hours of sleep did you get?" Then, realizing that they're not actually that scared about what they're doing, they're just in a shitty state of mind, so they're focusing on the worst possible case scenario.

When I work with somebody, it's a whole life overhaul. We're looking at, are the relationships supporting this endeavor? Are the people around you saying, "You can't start a podcast, I've never seen somebody start a podcast?" or are you surrounded by people who all have started successful podcasts, in which case it feels totally normal?

Ben Stein: Right, okay. That makes sense. You haven't always been a life and career coach. What was your past life, and what brought you to the precipice of change, and what did that change look like?

Devin Martin : Yeah. I think the biggest realization is that I kind of always have been a coach. I

# Purpose UP

never called myself that, but at some point, it was pointed out to me enough times that I'd always tended to be that to people, people would always come to me when they wanted a kick in the ass, or they wanted to be told a hard truth, and avoided me when they were trying to not see something about themselves. I've always been obsessed with growth, and transformation, and been through my own struggles, so I think it is natural.

Before I did this professionally, I actually worked in the security industry, which means, not the securities, but physical security, cameras, biometrics, card access. Essentially, I dropped out of multiple colleges, I was extraordinarily frustrated with the education system, and kept trying to find a path that worked for me, or a mentor that inspired me. I went from sound recording technology, to be a sound engineer, to English, to sociology, to philosophy. I even got into some graduate-level philosophy without an undergrad degree, at one point, and I dropped out of all of them. I worked as a security technician, pulling cables under houses, drilling holes, hooking up alarm systems.

Over the course of 13 years, about, I eventually got to a point where I was Northeast Operations Manager for a company, and doing a lot of consulting work for them, clients like the Federal Reserve Bank, Time Warner Cable, American Online, the post office. Massive, multi-million dollar security systems whose purpose was to define boundaries, and keep track of who crosses them. Whereas, my purpose in life looks a lot more like dissolving boundaries, and helping people achieve transcendent states of self, and merging with other people. I lived a dual life. I basically made good money, had a lot of freedom, and I worked from home more often than not, I had an office in the city I could go to, and then, in my spare time, I was meditating, doing [sha-man-ic 00:08:00] work, playing in bands, recording music, studying philosophy, leading a philosophy discussion group, and eventually studying health, nutrition, and then becoming a coach part-time.

Ben Stein: Okay. I think I read in your bio that you spent some time leaving the world behind, and you were up in the mountains for a while. Is that accurate?

Devin Martin : Yeah, yeah. I was working full-time in security and coaching part-time, and I couldn't quite see the shift. I couldn't imagine how it was possible to make the kind of living that I was making to sustain the kind of lifestyle that I had, living in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, beautiful apartment, nice wine, nice clothes, going out to dinner, not worrying about things. I kind of just came to the realization that the level of consciousness that I was operating at wasn't cutting it. There's an Einstein quote something to the effect of, "The level of consciousness that comes up with the problem is not the same level that can solve it."

I basically just gave up. I said, "I quit." I quit my job, shaved my head into a

# Purpose UP

mohawk, cut the sleeves off my dress shirts, went to Burning Man, and then sent a guy a check for a year's rent on a log cabin on top of a mountain in North Carolina I'd never been to, and just committed to not work for the year ...

Ben Stein: Did your own Walden Pond, huh?

Devin Martin : Yeah. It's funny, I never really liked that book, and I feel like I should really go back and read it again. Yeah, I had no phone, no internet, no television. I had always had this vision of, "What would I do if I got cancer?" For some reason it was this story that I told myself, that if I got cancer, it would give me permission to lead this 100% purposeful life where I would eat the perfect food, exercise perfectly, meditate perfectly, read everything I wanted to read, never work a job I didn't believe in. I came to realize that I might give myself cancer just to get permission to do that, so that I should probably just stop f\*cking around, and stop doing everything that I knew I wasn't in integrity with, and just focus on living a life of complete integrity, and that that would probably create the state of consciousness from which I would start making better choices.

Yeah, I quit, I moved to the mountain, and I lived a very structured life off the grid.

Ben Stein: Nice. I'm fascinated by that, just because it sounds like something I'd love to experiment with. What did your time up there look like? Or, down there ...

Devin Martin : I had a spreadsheet of daily activities, and I would work my way through it every day. I'd wake up, meditate for an hour, drink tea, have a light breakfast, read something spiritual, meditate for another hour, and then the rest of the day, the order of things would change, but it was the same basic thing. I would do intensive yoga, usually, for an hour, I would do 30-60 minutes of breathing exercises. I was a musician my whole life. I always recorded other people's music, and played guitar for singers, and I never learned how to sing, so I did vocal exercises every day. I chanted a couple of spiritual things every single day. I learned how to barefoot run in the trails around the mountain, because I'd always been a terrible runner. I usually did a third hour of meditation in the evening. I journaled every evening, I dream-journaled every morning. I started practicing dream yoga at night, and trying to lucid dream, which worked occasionally.

I did a lot of studying. I read every day, something scientific, something spiritual, and something fun. I always had 3 things. I read a lot of scientific papers on health, on studies that looked at any scientific material basis for subtle energy and spirituality. The major theme of the year for me was intuition, really studying, what is it? It's become an obsession, and it's something I think ...

Most people I work with have a really hard time making decisions, and especially

# Purpose UP

when it comes to the major life decisions like, "Where should I live? Who should I spend my time with? What should I do for a living?" They obsess, intellectually, about moving parts around, and dissecting failure points, but usually underlying those obsessive thoughts, there's an intuitive feeling or knowing, and I would make a distinction between those 2. I would say there's an instinctive feeling and an intuitive knowing of what they should be doing. People are totally disconnected from that. We could dig into why, but intuition became a real theme, because I felt like I intuitively knew I should be doing something differently for many years, and I was looking for a way to justify it or commit to it.

**Ben Stein:** Yeah, I think a lot of people, including myself, can identify with that. It's a very human feeling, in our day and age. I'm fascinated by that. My first question is, did you write a book about the experience? Because it seems very book-worthy. Then, the second question is, I want to dive a little bit more into that intuition, because it seems like you've probably got some special insights there.

**Devin Martin :** Yeah. The book will probably come in the next few years. As far as intuition goes, I've had an intuition that I have to write a book my entire life. Right now, I have 2 of them bouncing in my head, but I also had a very clear intuition that I had to work with more people first. My personal transformation is important, but it's more important how it helps other people, so I need to become really clear on how to pass on the insights that I got.

I think a lot of coaches, in particular, write a book too soon. They see it is more of a marketing thing than an actual encapsulation of their work. I feel like I'm paying my dues now. I work with people, and I take obsessive notes, and I send them really great notes, but I also keep a list of insights, recurring themes, things that keep coming up that I know are patterns that relate to what's going on culturally and socially for is.

Intuition is one of them. It's one of those things that I think, historically, we had a much better sense of. With the rise of rational modernity, intellectual obsession, we've conflated instinct and intuition, essentially.

**Ben Stein:** Okay, explain?

**Devin Martin :** I think of them as 3 separate things, instinct, intellect, and intuition. Instinct, you could call your gut feeling, and it's literally any time you say, I feel this way about something. Intellect would be the brain, and it's, "I think." I think this is going to work, I don't think it's going to work. Intuition, if we're going to tie it in the body, it would probably be the heart. People say, "Follow your heart," and it's, "I know."

I think any time people are trying to make a decision, all 3 of those things are

# Purpose UP

happening. Because we live in a world that thinks that rational thought is the highest form of knowing, we don't believe anything can transcend, there's no trans-rational system in our body, according to science. There's nothing that transcends intellect. We take anything that might actually have more information than our brain, and we reduce it. We say, "If it's not rational, it's irrational," so it's like a gut, it's like an instinct. We use our brain to control our instincts. We have instinct, impulses, you basically want to have sex with or fight everything, if you're a guy, and then your brain says, "No, not in public. We can't do that here."

I would say, there's also a higher voice which has more information than the brain. You could talk about your subconscious, which we know we're not conscious of the vast majority of information in our body, so that's included. Then, you could maybe talk about the super-conscious, or the collective consciousness, or some spiritual, or however you want to quantify it.

Ben Stein: The universe.

Devin Martin : Yeah, the universe. I think the universe speaks through us. Anybody who's creative, who's written a song, or written a book, and tried to do it consistently will talk about it, it's more about getting out of the way. What they're saying is, "I've got to shut the intellect down, I've got to stop filtering the information, and let something pass through me."

Ben Stein: Right, more of a vessel.

Devin Martin : Right, and when you do, something shocks you when it comes out, and then 5 years later, you look back at it, and you're like, "Oh. I didn't even realize at the time what I was doing, but that was brilliant, or that was insightful." I think that's why meditation is so key, because it's the process, essentially, for modern people, it's the process of controlling your awareness so you can choose, "Am I going to listen to my body? Am I going to listen to my mind? Am I going to listen to my heart?" For most people, it involves ignoring the brain, because it thinks too much.

Ben Stein: Okay. Sorry, my mind is just blown here.

Devin Martin : That's the point.

Ben Stein: When you take on clients, I'm a fan of meditation myself, and I wouldn't say I've got a developed practice, but I work to do at least 15-20 minutes a day, and I find that serves me well. How do you get people on the track? What are the resources you introduce them to? How do you get them started?

Devin Martin : Yeah, yeah. I used to be really anti-guided meditation, and anti-apps. I would send

# Purpose UP

a lot of people to take classes. I think it's really important to be in an environment that's structured. It's really hard, especially for people who live in the city and work a serious job to stare at your phone all day, answer email, be on the phone, be go, go, go, go, go, and then just stop. I think you need an environment that supports you. Then, I realized, most people need preparation more than they need actual meditation.

If you take yoga, you spend 60-90 minutes exhausting yourself, and then, at the end, you have shavasana, where you lay down for a second. If you've worked your ass off, there's a moment of just blissful non-thought. Essentially, that's what asana, the postural yoga practice, is all about. It's about preparing you for meditation. It has as much to do with tiring your body as it does with getting your breathing going properly.

I'll get a lot of people to do yoga. I've gotten a lot of people to go to a place called The Art of Living, which teaches breathing exercises. I went there 15 years ago when I was completely lost, severely depressed, 4th generation atheist, no spiritual reality in my life at all, and just learning how to control my state. I realized breathing is, for most people, in the beginning, it's more powerful than meditating, because it gives you the ability to control your body and your mind that we're just never taught in school.

I think, you have to learn how to focus. You have to learn how to put your awareness on 1 thing before you can actually meditate. The breath, because it's in the body, and it's in the present moment, and because it's so powerful, is a great place to start. I'll get a lot of people doing, essentially, taking breathing exercises, classes, if they will. If they won't, I'll introduce them to simple zen meditation, which is count the breath, 1-10. Then, if that's not good enough, Headspace. It's a great app, simple mindfulness. It really, really gets a lot of people turned on to meditation. I think it's awesome.

Ben Stein: Nice. If someone has a meditation practice, does something like the Art of Living help them take it to the next level, in terms of, like a weekend away, or a week away? What does that look like?

Devin Martin : Yeah. They have the Happiness Program, they call it, which is mostly about breathing exercises. Then, they have a program called Sahaj Samadhi, which is, they don't call it TM, but it's essentially transcendental meditation. Then, once you've done those, you can do ...

Ben Stein: Is that essentially the same thing as mantra meditation, or is there something more there?

# Purpose UP

Devin Martin : Yeah, exactly. It's 20 minutes in the morning, 20 minutes in the evening. Instead of focusing on your breath, you focus on a mantra. I did that for many, many years before I learned Zen. For me, that was an awesome beginning, and then, I am just organized differently, so Zen worked better for me, I think.

Ben Stein: All right, then, what's the core principle around Zen?

Devin Martin : In Zen, they start with focus, so you count the breath. In the United States, there's really 2 different schools of Zen. The place I went, Zen Mountain Monastery in New York, everybody starts with breathing. Then, once you have what they call access concentration, which means you put your concentration on something, your focus on something, and it stays there, then you can choose a path. They offer both paths there. One is Zazen, where you just sit. There's no structure. Because you have your awareness, you have strong concentration when you sit, you can be present and in the moment, and then all sorts of crazy things happen.

The other is Koan practice, where they give you these riddles that can't be solved rationally, like, "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" is the one everybody knows. What they're essentially doing is breaking your intellectual mind, or your attachment to your intellectual mind, because if you answer intellectually, the teacher recognizes that, and they say, "No, that's not the answer." Then, you'll have an aha moment, where you'll just come running in, and say, "It's this!" You say something, and they recognize, "Oh, that was an intuitive leap you took. You didn't actually rationally get there. Then, they give you another Koan which is much harder.

Ben Stein: What does the answer to that question look like that they would give you a passing grade on?

Devin Martin : It looks like an expression on your face, really. It's not even necessarily the words you answered with, as much as it is, they see that you let go of the intellectual response. That wasn't my path, so I don't have a lot of experience with it. I just know of it in passing. I was much more about Zazen. They also very much see spirituality linked with intuition, which, I realize now, is probably why I was drawn to it.

Ben Stein: Okay, cool. You take your clients through mindfulness, get them breathing right so they can change their state. What are the common themes you alluded to in the modern world that you think bring people away from intuition? What are those themes that you see?

Devin Martin : I think it's our schooling, which is teaching us how to be competitive, and how to be critical, which is really helpful up until the point where it becomes the only thing



# Purpose

you can do. The extreme version of this is probably going to law school. If you have friends who are lawyers, they're amazing at arguing. Sometimes to the extent that they can't even see their own truth. They can tear apart any argument so far that there is no truth.

I studied philosophy in college long enough to get lost in post-modernism, and realize if you look at anything long enough rationally, it just falls apart. Perspectives are primary, and everything has some truth in it. No words have all of the truth. Truth with a capital T is something we can't even really talk about, but it's not something that the modern world values very much. I think ... Yeah, go ahead.

Ben Stein: What's interesting is, I'm resonating with what you're saying, but also, if I feel like I'm a client coming in, I feel like I want some more brass tacks stuff, and this sounds so out there.

Devin Martin : Yeah, no, and honestly, I don't talk about intuition that much with clients. What I do is very personal to whatever their goals are. People set goals, and I work with their goals. Some of the work gets here. Mostly, it's about their career. Pretty much everybody comes to me because they hate what they do with a living, or they love it, but they're stuck. They're bored, they think they should be doing something bigger, they want to launch a company, or they want their company to be more successful, or they want to change the culture of their company.

Getting them operating as their best self is physical, mental optimization, is the foundation, and then on top of that is, "Okay, what are you doing with your life? What's your purpose, why are you here, and what do you want that to look like over the next year, 5 years, 10 years, and what are you doing about that tomorrow?" Sometimes that means running business plans, sometimes that means figuring out how to network better, sometimes that means figuring out how to market yourself. It gets nitty-gritty and very specific, but it depends on the person and what they're looking at.

Ben Stein: You've touched on purpose, and purpose holds a special place in my heart as I dive into the subtleties of it. Are people scared of that word, as I know I am, because sometimes it can seem big and scary, or do you help people break it down into, I don't know, attaching their heart and their intellect together? How does purpose work with their clients?

Devin Martin : Yeah, I think people aren't scared by the word, I think they're intrigued by it, but I think they're scared of committing to an answer. I think it feels a bit amorphous, and a bit daunting, and everyone's afraid if they commit to a purpose, it's going to change, and they'll have fucked up, and they'll have wasted their life, like, "What if I choose the wrong one?"

# Purpose

I usually talk about it as having an essence and a form. The essence is something necessarily a bit broad and vague which everything else resonates with. The forms are the specific things you're actually doing, like your job. The essence, most likely never changes, and the forms you do until they're done, and then a new form emerges.

Ben Stein: Okay, I like that.

Devin Martin : In the broadest sense, my purpose is to raise consciousness. For me, specifically, it's about raising other people's consciousness so they will make better decisions in their lives. When I look at everything I see in the world, every problem I see, every potential perspective is always in consciousness. I always think, "Ah, if this person was more awake, if they held just a couple more perspectives, they would make a better decision, this would all work out." Whenever I see myself being of service to somebody else, it's when I give them an insight, when I just see them go, "Oh," and I see their perspective broaden, and they take in a new truth. I try to enact that.

The forms, I write blog posts, I appear on your podcast, I work as a coach, but it's also about when I meditate, when I read books, when I'm a father. Everything I'm doing is making me better at this, and I can very quickly look at anything I'm doing. I want to watch this TV show. Is this going to serve my purpose, yes or no? It's not that I don't go off-purpose on purpose, it's not that I don't have fun and just mess around, but the more on-purpose I live, the more energy I have, the more clarity I feel, the happier I am, and I think the more effective I am.

Ben Stein: Yeah. I think that all makes good sense. I like that essence versus form structure, because it allows you to have a guiding light while being able to, mix metaphors, be a sail ship and change tack.

Devin Martin : Yeah, and I think if you're doing it well, you have to change. If you go into it down one path, and after 5 years it just feels empty to you, you've succeeded, you haven't failed. It doesn't mean you chose wrong, it means you have to choose again. Now you're wiser, you have more information, you have more skills, you have better things to do. I worked in the security industry for over a decade, which seems absurd, considering who I am now, but the insights I got into corporate structures, I spent all day navigating corporate bureaucracies, getting massive projects done, seeing how frustrated people were, seeing what happens in board rooms, seeing how decisions were made, how resources are spent. The insights I got into how the companies were structured, into how people feel being in that system are massive. I couldn't do my job now if I didn't have that.

Ben Stein: You can empathize a lot more with some of your clients who are in those

# Purpose UP

structures.

Devin Martin : Yeah, yeah. The work I'm doing now, with CEOs, helping them change the structure of their company, I couldn't possibly do the same way if I hadn't done that. I see a lot of people beating themselves up and feeling bad about their path, as opposed to looking for the way to integrate all of their experiences into a bigger picture that will actually put them in a great position for their next job. I constantly work with people, "Okay, this is your resume ..." Everyone either says, "I've spent too long in one career, I'm pigeon-holed," or they say, "I've done too many things, I don't have enough experience in any one thing." They're just really good at telling the story of how they're not qualified.

We'll step back and say, it's a forest for the trees thing. I'll say, "Really, if you look at all of these different skills, and experiences that you've had, you can find this one vision that they're all aiming at. You are uniquely suited for that. No one else is." When you tell that story in an interview or on a cover letter, you'll be shocked at the response you get.

If I can ground it for a second, I have a woman who I work with who, she flew helicopters in the National Guard, giant Chinook helicopters, and she worked as a computer programmer, and she was just bored out of her mind. She was brilliant. She was this hard-working, brilliant woman. Very early on, talking to her, it just clicked for me. I was like, "Oh, you should be writing code for flight simulators." They need coders, and they need coders who have flown things. The second she reached out to the biggest company that does this, they just jumped up and down, and were like, "Oh my god, you're like gold to us." She was so happy. That was a really quick, simple version, but most people have that kind of synergy, if they're willing to be creative and look for it.

Ben Stein: Mm-hmm (affirmative), that's a really cool story. What would you say in the scenario of a person who's struggled in their career, this is somebody I know, who's had some struggle holding jobs down, under-employed, not living up to their potential, and getting them to really accept responsibility for themselves and get out of a state of paralysis? Have you come across that?

Devin Martin : Are they asking for help, or are you asking for help, because ...

Ben Stein: No, this is somebody that I know that is looking for help.

Devin Martin : I ask that because one of the things that comes up regularly as a coach is that somebody reaches out for somebody else. They say, "My son," or, "My husband," or, "My wife is stuck." It's always a question of, do you have the need and the want to change? If that's there, then it's looking at, "Okay, what's getting in the way?" Do

# Purpose

you have no idea where you want to go? In which case, there's a huge introspective muscle you need to work on to figure out what you like, what you don't like, what you're good at, what you're not good at.

Is it a question of, you have some clarity, but you're dealing with fear and anxiety how to execute? In which case, you need strategies, you need coping mechanisms. Generally, when I work with somebody, it's, everybody has a vision of a bigger life, and there's a point at which they lock up, where they start moving towards it, and then they shut down. Most people don't really objectify that point at which they start to get scared and they start to shut down. I find that if you hang out right around that edge and take deep breaths, and take care of yourself, and just push up against that edge, it starts to move.

It's very often helping people calibrate their risks so that they're not overwhelming themselves. People who get shut down have been trying to do everything all at once, not succeeding, and then shutting down. They've been trying to go too far, too fast, and not letting themselves build momentum. I'll usually work on getting them in a good state of mind, getting good habits in place, daily routines. Then, when your best self comes forward and says, "This is what I really want," you say, "Okay, let's take manageable steps to get there, and let's manage what happens and what arises emotionally and intellectually when you do this."

That's why weekly sessions are so important. It's like, "Okay, here's where you were. This week you were supposed to write your resume, call 3 people and ask them to meet for coffee, and go to the gym 4 times. What worked, what didn't work, and let's talk about why." It becomes very, just logistical, sometimes.

Ben Stein: Right, yeah, you got to get to all the brass tacks.

Devin Martin : Yeah.

Ben Stein: In terms of, I think you've eloquently addressed how you do your work, what you start with, how you define your purpose. As you look to grow and evolve, do you get coaching yourself? Where are you looking to evolve yourself, on your personal roadmap?

Devin Martin : I have worked with a number of coaches over the years. When I first started coaching, part of my training was to work with a coach. When I started building my business, I worked with people to help me with marketing.

Ben Stein: Just to take a sidebar there, what did the coach training look like for you there?

Devin Martin : I went to the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, back when it was an in-person

# Purpose UP

school, and became a holistic health coach. In general, I would say, as I said about dropping out about all of those colleges, I'm an autodidact, I'm an obsessive learner, and I'm not a great student. I'm very impatient, I don't learn well in groups. I always want to go faster and in different directions, so I can't be in classrooms very easily. Mentorship is something that has been difficult, and I tend to get a lot out of people very quickly, and then want to move on to somebody else.

Ben Stein: All right.

Devin Martin : Yeah. What I have found, and this is what I tell a lot of people who feel stuck with their social circles or their access to teachers is, you can raise your consciousness through technology. I am an obsessive reader. I've become a huge lover of podcasts. I think there are ways of hanging out with people who don't live any more, or people who don't live near you, or people who wouldn't talk to you. I think I'm constantly seeking mentorship and coaching through technology, which obviously is limited as far as the feedback I can get, but I think for a lot of people, if you want the world's best teachers, you can get them now. You can take MIT and Harvard classes online for free.

Ben Stein: What are some top podcast picks, and maybe some top books that you recommend to people as they're working on evolving themselves?

Devin Martin : Depending on the person, I love Joe Rogan. I feel like he's an enlightened meathead. He's not preaching to the choir, he's preaching to people who need to hear it. The dudes are having a hard time talking about their emotions and their spirituality, he's going to sneak some of that in there, and open people up, and I love it. I like Tim Ferriss. Tim Ferriss, Dave Asprey, the Bulletproof guy. I've recently gotten really into On Being with Krista Tippett. It's an NPR thing. She asks everyone about their spiritual background. It gets really interesting guests on there.

Books, I guess there are books that I tend to give away, and there are books that I very rarely give away, that I think are like gold. The people that have had the biggest impact on me, that I don't expect others to read and enjoy as much, are people like Ken Wilber, he's an integral philosophy guy. Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance is one of my favorite books. I've recently gotten into Nassim Taleb, he's the Black Swan author, Anti-Fragile is his more recent book. Just really powerful stuff.

The stuff I tend to give away is more, there's a book called The Big Leap, which is very much about the ways that we limit ourselves, the ways that we start to have success, and then we self-sabotage and bring ourselves back down to what we consider to be comfortable levels. He has a term called, "upper limit behaviors," which describes this pattern, which comes up with almost everybody I work with. I

# Purpose

always give away that book. It's a very simple concept. Everybody gets it, everybody knows they do it, and as soon as you know you do it, and you can put a name on it, it's a lot easier to stop doing it.

Ben Stein: Okay. That was The Big Leap?

Devin Martin : Yeah, The Big Leap, by Gay Hendricks.

Ben Stein: Cool. I think, to round us out a little bit here, I think you delved into breathing, yoga, meditation as a way for people to ground themselves. Anything else that you'd recommend, as action items that people can do to get more in-touch with their purpose?

Devin Martin : Yeah, I think the area that we haven't really talked about as much, and that's always important, is relationships. You've probably heard the saying, "You're the average of the 5 people you associate with most." I think, for people who do change or have changed, and are going through this process, I'd say they're on the path. Once you start changing, and you have success, you realize that it's never-ending.

What generally happens is that some of your relationships, you realize, become limiting. It can get incredibly lonely when you start growing away from people that you grew up with, you worked with, or you went to college with. I find a lot of people getting stuck on this path because they're afraid to let go. Probably more importantly, what that means is, they're afraid to seek new people. They're afraid to get outside of their comfort zone.

I would say, if you see people who are living with purpose, and you admire them, move towards them. Put yourself in situations like, where would they hang out? What would they be doing? Don't be the expert in the room, go be the novice. Go be completely confused and ask a lot of questions. Essentially, there's a center of gravity in the room, and if it's above you, it'll pull you up.

It could be, practically speaking, I get people going to, there's a co-working space, the center for social innovation on the west side in Manhattan. I work with a lot of people who are entrepreneurs, or sole proprietors, they're freelance, they're working from home, they've been disgusted with the office, and so they've isolated themselves. They need to be in an environment with a whole bunch of other people who are figuring this out as well, or maybe they're further along in figuring it out.

You go to a place like CSI, and the energy is amazing, and there's all these people asking these big questions, and taking big risks to figure them out, and supporting

# Purpose UP

each other, and challenging each other. I think, oftentimes, we get so internally focused trying to figure out our purpose, that we realize that, part of it, it's a social question. As a culture, we're all shifting, and you can't solve it on your own. You need to engage other people.

Of course, I say get a coach. Also, just get involved in things that scare you, or challenge you. What are you curious about? Just move towards that, is probably the simplest way of thinking about it.

Ben Stein: Awesome, awesome. Yeah, I think that's all really great advice, and I'm really glad you brought that relationship piece up, because I think that is very important, and it is like that crabs in a bucket, when you try to grow yourself, and people can bring you down, but you need to have the strength to move past that, sometimes. Awesome. I think that's a great place to wrap things up a little bit. Where can people find more about you and what you do?

Devin Martin : My website, [lifestyleintegrity.com](http://lifestyleintegrity.com), is probably the best place. I'm on Twitter, @flow\_coach. I don't tweet an awful lot. I do a little bit of blogging for The Huffington Post. I would say those are 3 good places.

Ben Stein: Nice. Any parting words for the audience?

Devin Martin : I would say, stop thinking about it, just do it. I think, prioritize action. When I look at the most successful people I work with, and that means both the people who make the most money and the happiest people, they're not necessarily smarter, they don't come from better backgrounds, they tend to just make more mistakes, which means they get more opportunities to correct themselves, to learn, to adjust course. I think being action-oriented and courting failure is what success looks like.

Ben Stein: Awesome, awesome. I love that. Thanks so much for being on the podcast, and making some time for me. I think there was some amazing stuff that you shared with us today, so I really appreciate it.

Devin Martin : Yeah, thanks for having me, it was great.

Ben Stein: Hello again, friends. I hope you enjoyed that episode. If you got something out of it and think others would too, please go to the iTunes store and give me a rating and review. That's the best way for others to find out about the podcast, and I'd really appreciate it. Thank you. If you're looking for other ways to connect, please find me at [purposeup.com](http://purposeup.com), on Twitter @purpose\_up, or you can find a link to my Facebook group on the website. Lastly, I'll leave you with a question, "What are you going to do today to look for or act on purpose?"

# *Purpose UP*

How did we do?



If you rate this transcript 3 or below, this agent will not work on your future orders